

# FEDERAL ECONOMIC STIMULUS PROPOSALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government recently announced what we already knew, that the economy has been in recession since last March. According to the Labor Department, from September to October, the unemployment rate jumped from 4.9 percent to 5.4 percent, the largest 1-month jump since February of 1986. There are now 7.7 million unemployed Americans across this country, an increase of over 1,650,000 since March. The terrorist attack of September 11 only hastened the economic downturn and highlighted the need for a Federal response to stimulate the national economy.

Congress, as we all know, is locked in the debate about how best to quickly revive the U.S. and global economy. We need a response that is tailored to meet the problem, one that puts money in the hands of consumers, one that stimulates job creation, one that helps those most immediately hurt by job losses.

Following the terrorist attack on September 11, the House and Senate budget committees issued a set of principles for the economic stimulus package. These principles stated that any stimulus measure should, first, be limited in duration; secondly, that it not cause the Federal Government to have an on-budget deficit; thirdly, that it not result in high, long-term interest rates; fourthly, that it be approximately \$100 billion in size; and, finally, that the cost should be fully offset in the future to ensure maximum repayment of our \$5.8 trillion Federal debt. I repeat that, that the cost be fully offset in the future to ensure maximum repayment of that debt. And that is an important point, that we have to make sure that we pay for what we expend.

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Sadly, the House of Representatives' leadership passed a tax bill disguised as an emergency stimulus package which ignored each of those principles. The misnamed Economic Security and Recovery Act, which basically only stimulated the corporations, provides little true economic stimulation to lessen our Nation's recession and will delete the U.S. Treasury of \$274 billion over the next 10 years. Some 58 percent, or \$161 billion, of this total would come from our Social Security and Medicare trust funds. It is coming at the backs of our senior citizens and their pensions.

In the long run, the bill is likely to increase the long-term interest rates, which would raise home mortgage rates and, thereby, threaten the long-term growth of the economy. The fiscal

discipline of the last 8 years that produced the largest budget surpluses in decades would be wiped out by this legislation, especially when combined with a \$2 trillion tax reduction bill passed earlier by this Congress.

The bill includes long-term tax benefits for the wealthiest 2 percent of our taxpayers, \$24 billion in retroactive tax relief for the largest corporations in America, accelerating the reduction in the top individual tax brackets affecting those persons making more than \$297,000 per year, and provided \$21 billion in tax benefits to U.S. corporate profits made outside the U.S. as long as the money is kept outside this country.

A scant 11 percent of the overall benefits of the bill would benefit those that are unemployed due to the downturn of the economy. That is 11 cents out of every dollar would only go for those that are in need.

The irresponsible failure to offset the cost of those tax cuts will leave us with future budget deficits and upward pressure on long-term interest rates. I would repeat that this bill would come and create additional deficits for our country.

Finally, the passage of this bill, and as we look at a bill, we have to make sure that it helps those that are in need and that it looks at stimulating the economy. It should follow the balanced alternatives that would quickly put money in the hands of people who have been hurt by the economic downturn and most likely to spend it and stimulate the economy. September 11 not only hurt New York, but it hurt everyone. It hurt those people on the borders that are having to wait. I ask that we really take into consideration and that we seriously look at what we are doing and that we vote for an appropriate piece of legislation.

## BREATHING LIFE INTO HUMANITARIAN LEGISLATION FOR AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today the President of the United States signed legislation to assist the starving Afghan women and children. Not only was this legislation to address these terrible physical needs, but also to address the need to include Afghan women in the political and governmental structure of a new Afghan.

I would simply say that the signing of the legislation and the work that was done by the women of this House and the Senate, many women in the Democratic Caucus who began many, many months ago speaking about the plight of the women in Afghanistan, is something that we all can be proud of. I salute the signing of this legislation.

Right now, there are 1 million people from the Afghanistan nation on the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan. These individuals are suffering because of the inclement weather and the very cold season. In refugee camps, 175 people have already died, and most of those are children.

It is important as we sign legislation, Mr. Speaker, that we utilize part of the \$40 billion to act on the legislation. The people in Afghanistan need food, they need clothing, they need the ability to be resettled, they need housing that will be warm. In order to make this legislation a living, breathing document, I call upon the President of the United States to expend some of those dollars to utilize them immediately to help the starving children and the plight of those families on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is enormously important that as we fight to rid ourselves and the world of terrorism, that America emphasizes and reemphasizes its humanitarian approach and its view that there is a need to protect families, women, and children.

Mr. Speaker, just a few weeks ago I passed a resolution, H. Con. Res. 228, and that resolution was to emphasize that those children who lost parents or a guardian on September 11 should receive Federal benefits or any benefits with the highest priority. We know of the horrific tragedy of September 11, the divide that it caused in families and the loss of loved ones here in the United States, and I believe it is extremely important to emphasize the need to provide resources for those children. But equally so, as we have made a commitment to helping restructure the nation of Afghanistan, meaning to provide the opportunity for that government to build itself in a peaceful manner, we have also committed to making sure that women will be included in the rebuilding of that nation and in the governmental structure. We realize that the imprisonment of the burqas was the imprisonment of the spirit and of people's freedoms.

Now women are able to take off those uniforms. Now we need them to be fully involved in the structuring of government so that women's interests and children's interests can be emphasized.

Next week I intend to hold a briefing on the plight of children in Afghanistan and the hunger that they face, the devastation that they face, the fact that children have to go to work at 7 and 8 years old to provide for their families making bricks. We must find a way to involve ourselves in the aspects of giving Afghanistan and the people of Afghanistan a future and a sense of hope. Particularly, we must find a way to involve ourselves in the lives of those children so that they will become freedom-lovers, lovers of stability and government, and appreciating their